



# Australian Bureau of Statistics

## 6291.0.55.001 - Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery, Jun 2008

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## Summary

### Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery

Data from the monthly Labour Force Survey are released in two stages. The **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) are part of the second release, and include detailed data not contained in the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) product set, which is released one week earlier.

The **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) is released monthly. **Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly** (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003) includes data only collected in February, May, August and November (including industry and occupation).

Since these products are based on the same data as the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the **6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Main Features** are relevant to both releases.

#### IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SAMPLE DESIGN

Following each Census of Population and Housing, the ABS selects a new sample for the Labour Force Survey (LFS). This is done to ensure that the sample continues to accurately represent the distribution of the Australian population. Cost savings were made in the 2006 sample redesign by taking advantage of the sampling efficiencies related to the introduction of composite estimation. This enabled an 11% reduction in the LFS sample with only minor reductions in data quality relative to the previous design.

The new sample, based on the 2006 Census, has been phased in over the period November 2007 to June 2008. Detailed information about the new sample is provided in **Information Paper: Labour Force Survey Sample Design** (cat. no. 6269.0), which was released on 28 November 2007.

#### FORTHCOMING CHANGES

The ABS is facing a tight budget situation in 2008-09, which has led to a range of reductions in the ABS work program. One of the reductions is that from July 2008 the sample size of the LFS will be reduced by 24% when compared with the June 2008 sample implemented under the 2006 sample design.

The ABS will fully implement the sample reduction in July 2008. Implementing the full reduction in a single month will mean less common sample between June and July, and

hence the standard error on movements will be slightly larger than if the reduction was phased in. However, in order to maximise the savings in 2008-09 the reduced sample needs to be fully implemented from July 2008.

The new sample, while smaller, will still be representative, with selections made in all parts of Australia. There will be increased volatility in the estimates, particularly the original and seasonally adjusted estimates, but this volatility will be random. Given the increased volatility in the original and seasonally adjusted estimates, the ABS would continue to encourage users to focus on trend estimates as the increased volatility seen in the original and seasonally adjusted estimates will be dampened through the 'trending' process.

Further information about the sample reduction was provided in the April and May issues of this publication. Last month's issue included a Technical Note outlining some changes to the population benchmarks used in producing LFS estimates. The article in the April issue highlights the reasons for the reduction, expected sample size, the impact on the quality of estimates and the impact on LFS products and associated surveys.

## About this Release

A range of Excel spreadsheets and SuperTABLE datacubes. The monthly spreadsheets contain broad level data covering all the major items of the Labour Force Survey in time series format, including seasonally adjusted and trend estimates. The monthly datacubes contain more detailed and cross classified original data than the spreadsheets.

# Explanatory Notes

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Since these products are based on the same data as the **Labour Force, Australia** (cat. no. 6202.0) publication, the 6202.0 Labour Force, Australia Explanatory Notes are relevant to both releases.

## Quality Declaration - Summary

### INSTITUTIONAL ENVIRONMENT

Labour Force statistics are compiled from the Labour Force Survey which is conducted each month throughout Australia as part of the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) household survey program. For information on the institutional environment of the ABS, including the legislative obligations of the ABS, financing and governance arrangements, and mechanisms for scrutiny of ABS operations, please see ABS Institutional Environment.

## RELEVANCE

The Labour Force Survey provides monthly information about the labour market activity of Australia's resident civilian population aged 15 years and over. The Labour Force Survey is designed to primarily provide estimates of employment and unemployment for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

## TIMELINESS

The Labour Force Survey enumeration begins on the Monday between the 6th and 12th of the month, except for the Christmas and New Year holiday period. In December enumerations starts between the 4th and 10th (4 weeks after November enumeration begins). In January enumeration starts between the 8th and 14th (5 weeks after December enumeration begins).

Key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are published in two stages. *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0) and *Labour Force, Australia, Spreadsheets* (cat. no. 6202.0.55.001) are the first release. These data are released 31 days after the commencement of enumeration for the month, with the exception of estimates for December which are published 38 days after the commencement of enumeration.

Detailed data which were not part of the first release from the Labour Force Survey are published in *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed - Electronic Delivery* (cat. no. 6291.0.55.001) and *Labour Force, Australia, Detailed, Quarterly* (cat. no. 6291.0.55.003), which are released one week after the initial release.

## ACCURACY

The Labour Force Survey is based on a sample of private dwellings (approximately 30,000 houses, flats etc) and non-private dwellings, such as hotels and motels. The sample covers about 0.45% of the Australian Population. The Labour Force Survey is designed primarily to provide estimates of key labour force statistics for the whole of Australia and, secondarily, for each state and territory.

Two types of error are possible in an estimate based on a sample survey: non-sampling error and sampling error.

Non-sampling error arises from inaccuracies in collecting, recording and processing the data. Every effort is made to minimise reporting error by the careful design of questionnaires, intensive training and supervision of interviewers, and efficient data processing procedures. Non-sampling error also arises because information cannot be obtained from all persons selected in the survey. The Labour Force Survey receives a high level of cooperation, with an average response rate for the last year being 97%.

Sampling error occurs because a sample, rather than the entire population, is surveyed. One measure of the likely difference resulting from not including all dwellings in the survey is given by the standard error. There are about two chances in three that a sample estimate will differ by less than one standard error from the figure that would have been obtained if all dwellings had been included in the survey, and about nineteen chances in twenty that the difference will be less than two standard errors.

Standard errors of key estimates and movements since the previous month are available in *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0). The standard error of other estimates and movements may be calculated by using the spreadsheet contained in *Labour Force Survey Standard Errors, Data Cube* (cat. no. 6298.0).

## **COHERENCE**

The ABS has been conducting the Labour Force Survey each month since February 1978. While seeking to provide a high degree of consistency and comparability over time by minimising changes to the survey, sound survey practice requires careful and continuing maintenance and development to maintain the integrity of the data and the efficiency of the collection.

The changes which have been made to the Labour Force Survey have included changes in sampling methods, estimation methods, concepts, data item definitions, classifications, and time series analysis techniques. In introducing these changes the ABS has generally revised previous estimates to ensure consistency and coherence with current estimates. For a full list of changes made to the Labour Force Survey see *Labour Statistics: Concepts, Sources and Methods* (cat. no. 6102.0.55.001) Table 20.2.

## **INTERPRETABILITY**

The key estimates from the Labour Force Survey are available as original, seasonally adjusted and trend series. Seasonal adjustment is a means of removing the effects of normal seasonal variation from the series so other influences on the series can be more clearly recognised. Seasonal adjustment does not aim to remove the irregular influences which may be present and therefore month-to-month movements may not be reliable indicators of underlying behaviour. To assist in interpreting the underlying behaviour, the ABS produces the trend series by smoothing the seasonally adjusted series to reduce the impact of the irregular component. For further information, see *A Guide to Interpreting Time Series - Monitoring Trends* (cat. no. 1349.0).

Further information on the terminology and other technical aspects associated with statistics from the Labour Force Survey can be found in the publication *Labour Force, Australia* (cat. no. 6202.0), which contains detailed Explanatory Notes, Standard Error information and a Glossary.

## **ACCESSIBILITY**

Please see the Related Information tab for the list of products that are available from this collection.

# **Standard Errors**



Feb 78 to Sep 82	4.5	4.5	3.5	2.5	2.5	1.5	2.0	2.0	4.5
Oct 82 to Aug 87	4.0	4.0	3.0	1.8	2.0	1.0	1.8	1.3	3.5
Sep 87 to Aug 92	4.5	4.5	3.0	2.0	2.5	1.3	1.8	1.5	4.0
Sep 92 to Aug 97	5.3	4.6	3.5	2.4	2.9	1.3	1.3	1.0	4.0
Sep 97 to Mar 01	5.9	4.5	4.1	2.4	2.8	1.1	1.0	1.1	4.4
Apr 01 to Oct 07	5.9	4.8	4.4	2.5	2.9	1.3	1.8	1.3	5.3
Nov 07	6.0	4.9	4.5	2.5	3.0	1.4	1.7	1.4	5.3
Dec 07	6.1	5.0	4.5	2.6	3.0	1.4	1.6	1.4	5.4
Jan 08	6.2	5.1	4.6	2.6	3.1	1.4	1.5	1.4	5.4
Feb 08	6.2	5.2	4.7	2.7	3.2	1.4	1.4	1.5	5.5
Mar 08	6.6	5.4	4.8	2.7	3.6	1.4	1.2	1.5	5.6
Apr 08	6.7	5.6	5.3	2.9	3.7	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.7
May 08	6.8	5.7	5.5	2.9	3.9	1.5	1.1	1.6	5.8
Jun 08 Onwards	6.9	5.9	5.6	3.0	4.0	1.5	1.0	1.7	5.8

Capital City/Balance of State	Sep 87 to Aug 92	Sep 92 to Aug 97	Sep 97 to Mar 01	Apr 01 to Oct 07	From Nov 07
Sydney Major Statistical Region	4.5	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.8
Balance of New South Wales Major Statistical Region	4.5	5.3	5.7	5.0	5.7
Melbourne Major Statistical Region	4.5	4.6	4.6	4.2	5.0
Balance of Victoria Major Statistical Region	4.5	4.6	4.3	4.1	4.9
Brisbane Major Statistical Region	3.0	3.5	3.7	3.5	4.3
Balance of Queensland Major Statistical Region	3.0	3.6	4.3	3.7	4.7
Adelaide Major Statistical Region	2.0	2.4	2.4	2.1	2.5
Balance of South Australia Major Statistical Region	2.0	2.5	2.2	2.0	2.4
Perth Major Statistical Region	2.5	2.9	2.6	2.5	3.4
Balance of Western Australia Major Statistical Region	2.5	2.9	2.8	2.3	3.2

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